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REMARKS

After the foregoing amendment, claims 1-39 are pending in the application.

Rejection Under 35 U.S.C. § 112

Claims 3-11, 19-20, 23-26, 28-31, and 35 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 112 as being indefinite for failing to particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter which applicant regards as the invention.

Applicant has responded by amending claims 3, 5, 10, 19-20, 23, and 35 to replace the term "minor" with the term "substantially small". Claims 4 and 8 were amended to replace the term "approximately" with the term "substantially". Claim 24 was amended to replace the term "majority" with the term "substantial number". Claim 25 was amended to replace the term "contemporaneously" with the term "coincident". Claims 26 and 28 were amended to clarify the claim language.

Rejection Under 35 U.S.C. § 102 (e)

Claims 1-2, 12-14, 21-22, 32-34, and 36-39 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(e) as being anticipated by U.S. Patent Application Number 20010048688 issued to Fuhrmann et al. on December 6, 2001.

Applicant respectfully traverses this ground of rejection for the following reasons.

First, applicant's claim 1 recites:

"a first communication node of a plurality of communication nodes connected with processorless central equipment, wherein the first communication node sends one or more first portions of node-output information to the processorless central equipment;

wherein one or more additional communication nodes of the plurality of communication nodes send one or more additional portions of node-output information to the processorless central equipment;

wherein the first communication node receives from the processorless central equipment a portion of central-output information, wherein the portion of central-output information comprises the one or more first portions of node-output information and the one or more additional portions of node-output information."

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Fuhrmann does not teach these limitations. Instead, Fuhrmann discloses a network in a star structure comprising network nodes connected to a central star node. The central star node has interfaces that enable the messages of a transmitting network node to be transferred to other connected network nodes. However, Fuhrmann does not disclose that the central star node is processorless, as recited in applicant's claim 1. Thus, Fuhrmann does not supply the processorless central equipment element.

Second, Fuhrmann discloses that the other connected network nodes receive the messages sent by the transmitting network nodes. Likewise, a transmitting node can receive messages from other connected nodes. However, in contrast to applicant's claim 1, Fuhrmann does not disclose that the transmitting network node or the receiving network nodes receive "a portion of central-output information, wherein the portion of central-output information comprises the one or more first portions of node-output information and the one or more additional portions of node-output information", as recited by applicant's claim 1. In effect, this limitation requires that the transmitting node, when receiving messages, also receives its originally transmitted message along with messages sent from the other connected network nodes. Thus, Fuhrmann does not supply the one or more first portions of node-output information and the one or more additional portions of node-output information element.

In view of the foregoing, applicant submits that Fuhrmann does not describe each and every element of claim 1, and therefore claim 1 is not anticipated by Fuhrmann. Since claims 2, 12-14, 21-22, and 32-33 depend from allowable claim 1, these claims are also allowable over Fuhrmann.

Independent claims 34 and 37 each have a limitation similar to that of independent claim 1, which was shown is not taught by Fuhrmann. Therefore, claims 34 and 37 are likewise allowable over Fuhrmann. Since claim 36 depends from claim 34, and claims 38-39 depend from claim 37, these dependent claims are also allowable.

Rejection Under 35 U.S.C. § 103 (a)

Claims 15-18 and 27 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Fuhrmann in view of U.S. Patent Number 6,487,213 issued to Chao on November 26, 2002.

Applicant respectfully traverses this ground of rejection.

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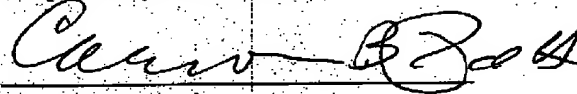
Claims 15-18 and 27 depend from claim 1. As noted hereinabove, Fuhrmann does not teach or suggest the "processorless central equipment" nor does Fuhrmann teach or suggest "a portion of central-output information, wherein the portion of central-output information comprises the one or more first portions of node-output information and the one or more additional portions of node-output information", as recited in applicant's independent claim 1. Chao does not teach or suggest the elements either. Thus, claims 15-18 and 27 are allowable over the proposed combination under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a).

Conclusion

It is respectfully submitted that the Office Action's rejections have been overcome and that this application is now in condition for allowance. Reconsideration and allowance are, therefore, respectfully solicited.

If, however, the Examiner still believes that there are unresolved issues, he is invited to call applicant's attorney so that arrangements may be made to discuss and resolve any such issues.

Respectfully submitted,



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